

The complaint

Mr A complains about Monzo Bank Ltd's decision to close his account.

What happened

In December 2020, Mr A opened an account with Monzo and let somebody else use it. A few days later, Monzo closed the account immediately.

Mr A complained to Monzo. Monzo responded to Mr A's complaint and advised the terms and conditions allow them to close the account. Monzo also said they wouldn't give Mr A any information on why they'd decided to close it. Mr A brought the complaint to our service.

Mr A told our service that an individual tricked him into sharing his account details. Mr A said he'd been bullied.

Our investigator reviewed things and didn't think Monzo had acted unfairly. She explained that Monzo were entitled to close Mr A's account immediately – and as the account hadn't been used, she didn't think there had been a big impact on Mr A.

Mr A disagreed. He asked why Monzo allowed his *'fake friend'* to continue to have an account and not him. Mr A also shared screenshots of conversations between him and the individual who he said used his account.

Our investigator explained she couldn't comment on Monzo's actions relating to another customer's account. But she was still satisfied, based on the circumstances, that their actions when closing Mr A's account immediately was fair.

As an agreement couldn't be reached, the complaint has been passed to me to review.

What I've decided – and why

I've considered all the available evidence and arguments to decide what's fair and reasonable in the circumstances of this complaint.

Having done so, I'm not upholding Mr A's complaint – I don't think Monzo acted unfairly. I know Mr A will be disappointed, and I'm sorry I can't help him in the way he'd like me to. I've explained the reasons for my decision below.

I'm aware Mr A opened his Monzo account on 13 December 2020 and Monzo made the decision to close it immediately on 15 December 2020. It's important I explain that Monzo are strictly regulated and must take certain actions in order to meet their legal and regulatory obligations. They're also required to carry out ongoing monitoring of new and existing relationships.

Banks sometimes choose to end their relationship with customers. This can be due to a number of reasons, and a bank isn't obliged to give a reason to the customer. Just the same as if Mr A decided to stop banking with Monzo – he wouldn't have had to explain why. Monzo can only close the account immediately in certain circumstances. I've reviewed the full circumstances of this complaint, and I'm satisfied Monzo's actions were fair. The terms

and conditions of the account, which Monzo have complied with, explain the circumstances when Monzo can close an account without notice. While I can't share the reasons with Mr A directly, I'd like to reassure him that having reviewed everything, I'm satisfied Monzo haven't made an unfair decision.

I appreciate being left without an account would be distressing. But I'm aware Mr A didn't deposit any money into the account – and therefore wasn't actively using it. Mr A has likely found himself in this position because of another individual. He says he was tricked and bullied into sharing his account details. I don't doubt Mr A has been left in a very difficult position and I'm sorry he's found himself without a Monzo account. But I can't fairly say Monzo have acted unfairly.

Overall, I'm satisfied Monzo have complied with the relevant terms and conditions when closing Mr A's account immediately. Having reviewed everything, I'm satisfied Monzo didn't do anything wrong – and therefore I won't be asking them to do anything differently.

My final decision

For the reasons I've explained above, I don't uphold Mr A's complaint. Under the rules of the Financial Ombudsman Service, I'm required to ask Mr A to accept or reject my decision before 17 January 2022.

Hayley West
Ombudsman